
Brazil's Bebel Shows in Manhattan the Consummate Live Performer She Became

Contributed by Ernest Barteldes
Wednesday, 24 October 2007

On the second show in New York in promotion of *Momento* - her latest album - Bebel Gilberto completely refurbished the show she had originally played at the Blender Theater, when she was still recovering from an injury she had suffered early in the tour.

She played to a sold-out crowd that had been warmed up by Furró in The Dark, who had included Japanese singer Miho Hatori as a guest during their extended set.

Gilberto opened her own set with an alternate take on her "Tranquilo," which had a more of a bossa nova-tinged feel in comparison with the original version. She also took a differentiated approach to "Bring Back The Love," the first single from *Momento*.

For this show, she chose to give the tune a lounge-ish approach closer to one of the various remixes that have been available ever since the disc was made available. On "Os Novos Yorkinos", she kept the original arrangement, and she got the audience to sing along the "farofa, farofa" chorus from the tune's middle section.

From her previous releases she showcased "Sem Contenção" and "Mais Feliz," a song penned with the late Cazuzza that was a huge hit in Brazil via Adriana Calcanhoto (another Gilberto-Cazuzza hit was "Eu Preciso Dizer Que Te Amo," which appeared on the 1996 Red Hot and Rio compilation).

On the former, her band's percussionist showcased amazing chops, wowing the audience and getting everyone dancing at the same time, going into a techno-inspired beat as he did some jazzy improvisations.

For "Momento," Gilberto reminded the audience that people have to learn "to live the moment," which is the underlying message of the tune's Portuguese lyrics. She also performed Cole Porter's "Night And Day," also varying from the disc's version by adding an extended Stan Getz-inspired saxophone solo. On "Aganju," she also improvised a lot, playing flirtatiously with the audience as she went along.

The most lasting impression from that show is that Gilberto is becoming a consummate live performer. From having seen her perform numerous times (Town Hall, Blue Note and Blender Theater), you notice that she has notably increased her rapport with the audience and has also become more and more comfortable changing tunes around on a live format - something many recording artists are often reluctant to do.

One cannot help but wonder when Gilberto will grace us with a live DVD which documents this evolution. Maybe that will

happen in 2010, when she celebrates the 10th anniversary of her much-acclaimed Tanto Tempo, the CD that launched her into the international market.

Bebel Gilberto

Webster Hall, New York

September 18, 2007

Bebel Gilberto at Webster Hall